



THE



PROGRESSIVE



FARMER.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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OUR FARMERS' CLUBS.

What our Farmers are Doing and How the Work of Organizing is Progressing.

TRINITY CLUB.

Subject—Agricultural Clubs, County Institutes and the Convention.

Dr. Joseph Bird.—These are certainly fertile themes for every enterprising farmer. I have certainly been benefited by my attendance at the club. We compare notes and experience—our success and failures. It makes us read more, and calculate closer, in order to discuss the many questions presented by the club. I have myself put questions and have invariably received help and satisfaction after putting them to the test. I am satisfied that the policy of following the successful is a safe one. You all remember that some years ago we discussed at several of our meetings the subject of manure making and its application. Its effects are evident in all this section. In all my reading and my own experience I have seen nothing that improves upon our plans. Farmers live more isolated than any other class. They work on the same old line of thought—they ought to be pulled out of the old ruts. Therefore let them mingle more with each other. Ireland is specially adapted to the dairy business, and it is a large industry there but for the want of skillful operatives they have thus far failed to produce an article that commands the best prices. However, I notice that they are now establishing special training schools wherein the dairymen may be instructed. It is well to cultivate the mind but at the same time the hand must not be forgotten.

While the State is making such efforts to induce outsiders to come among us we are neglecting to develop and bring up those who are already here, and many of these become disheartened and leave.

J. B. Frazier.—I attend club meetings so seldom that it looks like inconsistency in me to speak of its benefits. I remember going with my father some fifteen years ago to some club meetings. The impressions made on me then, some of them at least, are vivid to-day. I am satisfied that every farmer should attend such meetings.

A. Parker.—I am convinced that every intelligent farming community should establish and maintain a farmers' club. Every farmer in the community should feel it his duty to attend each and every meeting he possibly can. I was as busy and hard pushed in work last summer as any one. But I made arrangements to attend the club meetings twice a month, and feel now like the time was profitably spent. On my way to one of our meetings during the busy season, I was asked by one of my neighbors in passing, "How can you spare the time from your work to attend these meetings?" I replied that a man should not be actuated entirely by selfish motives. I go for my own good, and besides I feel it to be my duty to help sustain the club for the general good. As good citizens we owe this to each other. I am earnestly seeking information and gladly avail myself of every opportunity to obtain it. It is true that in our association with farmers and reading on topics we find many impracticable theories and hasty articles that we should not accept. By concentrated effort churches, state and society are held together.

Rev. F. H. Wood.—I am not a farmer but I am a native of Randolph and brought up on a farm till 20 years old. I left the county 25 years ago. I have been ashamed of the farming of my county until a few years ago. Other counties are ahead but none have made more improvement of late than Randolph. The wave of improvement has come from the northwest corner. I see marked evidences of this in the farming, but more in the imple-

ments. These benefits have grown out of the clubs. The good effects are not confined to your immediate circle, but are plainly evident outside. The influences are spreading. It is desirable that the farmers in every township organize. All other callings are organized. Preachers, lawyers, doctors, mechanics are all organized, but the farmer will not organize worth a cent. By all means let us have the Club, the Institute and Farmers' State Convention.

D. M. Payne.—Some one has pertinently said that more than half of life is spent on what we eat, and while we live in a land of plenty it is a lamentable fact that many go hungry. To satisfy hunger is commendable. The producer is a benefactor and his cause a noble one. As farming is a worthy vocation it should be attended with some remuneration, either of emolument or honor. To render it such requires encouragement from those sources that are calculated to make it so. If the State and good society would fall in with their aid it would be such. To put the farmer in this position society must pay its respects, and communities must not be slack in providing means for its advancement. Assemblies for this purpose should consist of thinkers as well as laborers. Push without brains goes slow. Brains and muscle are not always wrapped in the same hide. When they are you have a foundation upon which to build as near a perfect man as it is possible to make. In the healthy business of farm life we have all that goes to make muscle. We only lack cultured brain to have the man. In evolving such men you curtail in some degree the necessity for so many learned lawyers and doctors with large fees. Thus the world will grow better. Such a state of things would be desirable. Let us form clubs and aid each other. If individuals are bettered communities are also. If the parts are made strong, the whole structure will be secure. Out of clubs will come county institutes. From these will spring State conventions, and in time national aid.

Man is a creature of desire for notoriety. Make it as possible in this as any of the learned professions and he will seek it. In this way his talent is secured. Talent and possibilities go together. As one expands the other increases. Cultivate the mind on a subject, that subject booms. Mental culture for the farmer brings rich soil and large yields, and these in turn bring peace and plenty. Is it fair for the husbandman to grope in ignorance, feeling his way like a snail, almost aimless when cyclones and blizzards are to be combatted by him, and the world fed by him and he the noblest factor in the whole computation. Reason, fair dealing and justice answer no. Give him light and latitude and the soil will respond with almost mysterious yield. Petty larcenies will diminish with a corresponding ratio for stint in a majority of cases causes them. In this way, if no other, he will find out that he is one of the lords of the land, and monopolies, corners in speculations and strikes will cringe at his approach and the world will bless him.

Dr. Parker.—I am ready to testify that this club has been immensely beneficial to me and that I have never attended a single meeting in which there was not some help and encouragement afforded to any one who wanted to learn. For one I feel grateful to the steady going farmers of this community for their earnest efforts to improve the condition of our farmers. They have but to look around them to see the fruits of their labors. Unmistakably our club is doing good, and this should serve as an incentive for still further and more zealous endeavors to make our farm work more profitable and pleasant. We have as yet, however, but taken the first steps on the highway of an elevated agriculture. From the good already

done you ought to feel encouraged to never say quit as long as there is a single farmer in all this section who needs your sympathy and help.

The ambitious young man of today when casting around for avenue to excellent distinction, is bewildered when his eyes fall upon the glittering towers raised to such lofty heights by human genius and heroic effort. If his heart burn for military renown he shudders when he sees to what giddy and stupendous heights great warriors have mounted, and fixed high up their eternal fame. How dare he even hope to excel Alexander or Hannibal or Napoleon or Washington. It is almost sacrilege to even dream of outstripping either of these great chieftains. And if he look upon the grand array of great statesmen, learned jurists, eminent scholars and scientists, world renowned painters and sculptors, musicians, divines, great surgeons and physicians he is awed into silent wonder at their almost super-human excellence. How in the world can he ever think to soar to sublimer heights than Milton or Pollock or Shakespeare or Scott or Byron? To these great ones in almost every habitation of man and in every clime have been erected monuments built of marble and enduring brass that resist the ravages of time and shall perpetuate their fame to the remotest ages. Every nation under the sun takes pride in doing homage to her great men. But where in all the universe of God was there ever a monument erected by a people to a single one of the farmers? Where? There is not a single one in the world two inches long that was built to honor a farmer as such. Why is this? Simply because there has never been a single instance where a man has pre-eminently distinguished himself as a farmer. No, sirs! Never.

The vast domain of agricultural possibilities—a most boundless—has never been explored.

It is true that Jethro Tull, Elkana Watson, John Johnston, David Dickson and Dr. Jones have made a few tracks in this great field of research, and caught a few faint glimpses of its immense richness—"only this and nothing more."

While the naturalist has made gigantic strides towards absolute perfection in grouping, classifying and naming every bug and beetle, with every mammoth monster that roams the forest down to the tiniest insect that flits in the sunbeam he is familiar—he can tell you the nature and habit of every bird that flies and every fish that swims and every worm that crawls and every huge leviathan that wallows in the briny deep. But the farmer, poor fellow, gropes his weary way along the vale of shadows, having never once fixed his eyes upon the glittering pinnacles of his far away capabilities. Not one in a thousand knows even the merest rudiments of his calling—doesn't even know how to curry a cow and very likely doesn't know that she needs it. Where within the wide confines of the commonwealth of North Carolina is there now or has there been a single man who was or is an acknowledged authority on agricultural questions? I defy mortal man to name a single instance. We can name hundreds who are justly held as eminent authorities in almost every other calling here in our own State, while the patient, toiling farmer with now and then a feeble ray of borrowed light falling upon his way, is sorely puzzled over the very alpha of his God-given work and while he is slowly spelling out his first lessons—bla, ble, bli, blo, blu, bly—the favored of other vocations have passed away beyond the big bull-dog in the spelling book, easily and glibly calling out incompatibility, unintelligibility, incomprehensibility, and sure enough it is incomprehensible jargon to the bla, ble, bli, blo fellows.

In the name of the high heavens

is there no way out of this long night of bondage, from this thralldom of mental darkness? Oh for a Boanerges with a voice of apocalyptic thunder to shake off this enervating squalor of the soul, and split in twain the leaden firmaments and let in floods and oceans of all-healing light. And may some Moses speedily appear on the scene and give the command to forward, march! to the Canaan of deliverance.

If North Carolina would place a proper estimate upon her highest interests she cannot longer withhold her fostering care from the farmer and the farmer boy. There must be some legislation in their behalf, and now is the opportune time. Allow me to suggest a beginning point. Let the present legislature make liberal appropriations for establishing Agricultural institutes in every county of the state, where every farmer in each and every county may be taught how to farm and how to live. And also establish an agricultural and mechanical college, wisely located and liberally furnished with every needed appliance so that it may be universally beneficial all over the State. It is an urgent, crying necessity that the common farmer shall have some aid, some comfort, some help. Shall they forever plod and toil and suffer on and continue to pour into the State coffers their thousands in taxes for the general good with such meagre returns to themselves? The flimsy attempts in the past to give him relief are about as futile as to try to raise a good colt on dry stubble or stall feed an ox on chaff and thin air. What good is there to the farmer of all this hue and cry about dogs killing sheep and loudly calling upon the State to afford some protection against the incursions of the worthless and hungry curs? Until I am smarter than a sheep killing dog I have no business to make a fool of myself by trying to raise sheep. I would not give a snap of my finger for all the dog "whereases," "provided furthermore" and "alsos" of every statute and legislative enactments that could be crowded into all out of doors. And besides every general assembly since the spring that Ring was a puppy has been as afraid of this dog question as they would be to meet the devil in his night clothes. Yes, sir! They would fly from its simplest consideration as they would from the open jaws of the all-devouring whang-doodle. For one I say let the dog question rip. I can kill more dogs in a week than all the kennels in the country can spawn out in a month. You see I practiced medicine occasionally for twenty years. But there are other pressing needs of the farmers of the country that the legislators can take hold of and render invaluable aid and if their patriotic zeal is as fervent now as when they were before the people for their votes—it was red hot then—they will not hesitate but will gladly do all in their power to better the condition of the "dear people." All they lack is to know what will best subserve the farming interests and promote the general good and it should be the purpose of the farmers convention to say what they want done and suggest a line of state policy towards the farmer.

The State cannot longer ignore this, the most important factor in all her varied interests, but should at once show its appreciation of the men who are its main stay and solid support by a liberal effort to raise them up and out of their present dreadful estate. This in a great measure may be done as already intimated by establishing the county Institute through which the mass of the present generation of farmers may be reached and pulled out of the old ruts and the boys now on the farm may be taught the elements of a better system of agriculture, and thereby be the better prepared to prosecute a higher course of study

in the Agricultural and Mechanical College. Both of these (the college and the institute) are an absolute necessity or how can the farmer be educated in his calling? Every other profession, trade or business by which men gain a subsistence have their schools of training while the burden-bearing farmer is left out in the dark to grope his way as best he may.

Oh that the farmers of North Carolina could be aroused up to see their real condition and then have the manly courage to demand the helps which are theirs in simple justice. Then light and knowledge would pour in upon their tedious wanderings and they could strike out from these low grounds of sorrow for the high road to the kingdom come! Let the farmer henceforth feel with Tennyson that

Knowledge is now no more a fountain sealed,
Drink deep until the habits of the slave,
The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite,
And slander die. Better not be at all
Than not be noble.

PLEASANT RIDGE CLUB.

EDITOR PROGRESSIVE FARMER:—Our club met on January 1st with a full quorum present though not all the members. Yet we had the best attendance we have had for several months, and there seemed to be more interest manifested than for some time. We resolved to have the attendance better in our club or the membership smaller. We are with the farmers' club like we are with farming. We believe a club with a small membership well attended is better than one with a large membership poorly attended. Our club now numbers thirty-seven members. The chair appointed the following delegates to the next county meeting, which convenes on the 8th inst.: S. Pfaff, A. A. Flynt, R. B. Flynt, B. R. Kiser, R. L. Yarborough, W. A. Schultz and F. N. Pfaff. Having a good deal of business to transact we had no discussion on any particular subject, but we had a few speeches from various members upon our road laws. The majority of our members seem to approve of the employing convict labor and also all the insolvents in our courts who fail to pay their fines and costs. We notice in the tabulated statement made by the clerk of the board of county commissioners that half the fees paid by the county in such cases amounted to over two thousand dollars which would do a vast amount of work on our public roads. And not only would it do the work on our roads but we believe it would have a good effect on the morals of our people. Time would not admit of a full discussion upon this important subject at this meeting, so it was set apart for the topic of discussion at our next meeting on the third Saturday of the present month at 7 o'clock p. m.

F. N. PFAFF, Sec'y.

FARMVILLE CLUB.

The farmers' club of Farmville township met at its usual time and place and admitted five new members to its roll. Much interest was manifested on the subject of the proposed State convention of Farmers and it was resolved that this club endorse the proposition to call a convention of the farmers of the State in the city of Raleigh during the next legislature and pledge their support to any action that body looking to the elevation and dignifying of the industrial pursuits.

Other matters of local nature were discussed and all seemed hopeful of the benefits derived from the farmers' movement in the State. Subject for discussion at the next meeting—Rotation of crops.

FRANCIS JOYNER, Secretary.

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